

**AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION®**600 Maryland Avenue S.W. • Suite 800 • Washington, DC • 20024 • (202)406-3600 • fax (202)406-3604 • www.fb.org

November 4, 2005

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: IB Docket No. 05-221

Dear Chairman Martin:

The American Farm Bureau Federation is the nation's largest general farm organization in the country. We represent 5.8 million member families in 49 states and Puerto Rico. We strongly support efforts to increase broadband access throughout rural America. We know you share this goal, and we commend you on this effort.

Many rural areas are faced with low-quality, unreliable coverage. They are underserved by current technologies like digital cellular technology. Steps must be taken to address the shortfall in communications coverage for Americans in rural areas.

When first-responders, emergency personnel and even government officials were unable to talk to one another in Katrina's aftermath, the whole country witnessed the importance of reliable access to mobile communications. This is something with which millions of rural Americans are especially familiar. In rural communities across the country, people are forced to rely on ground-based systems with intermittent, poor-quality coverage that cuts out between mountains, in isolated areas, and during storms. America's farmers and ranchers and all rural Americans deserve better.

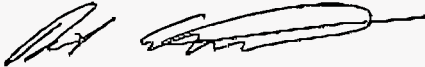
America must have a mobile communication system that serves everyone. We believe there is merit in a technology called Mobile Satellite Services (MSS). It can provide the universal and high-quality communications that our rural communities desperately need. Because MSS uses satellite technology to send signals to handsets similar to the mobile phones we use today, it could reach even the most remote areas of the country.

We understand that in order to provide the all-encompassing system our rural communities and first responders require, current licensees need robust spectrum. Farm Bureau believes allocation of this spectrum presents an opportunity for the FCC to demonstrate its commitment to rural Americans. Over 90 percent of our farm families work off the farm in order to help make ends meet. This makes a vibrant rural America just as important to the future of agriculture as is a vibrant agriculture to the future of rural America. We are well aware that availability of improved communication technology is the only way to increase the number and quality of jobs

in rural America. Increasing the availability of mobile satellite service will greatly benefit rural users by providing reliable service and broadband access.

We appreciate your consideration of our views and urge you to move quickly to distribute the spectrum to licensees that have demonstrated a commitment to MSS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Stallman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bob Stallman
President

cc: Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Jonathan S. Adelstein
Michael J. Copps
Marlene Dortch